



The MDGs and Sexual and Reproductive Health E-Bulletin August 11, 2005

Dear Colleagues,

As the 2005 World Summit, to be held in September 2005 draws nearer, Family Care International is preparing and distributing periodic e-bulletins to ensure that organizations working on sexual and reproductive health and rights around the world are kept up to date.

Making Progress

The paragraph calling upon governments to ensure universal access to reproductive health by 2015 survived the third draft of **the 2005 World Summit Outcome document**, which was released on Friday August 5th. To date, there has been no public opposition to this paragraph and hopes are high that it will be retained in the final outcome document.

The reference to ensuring access to reproductive health as a critical strategy toward achieving gender equality and women's empowerment also remains in the draft text. In the last round of informal discussions on the outcome, some governments, including Cuba, called upon the President of the General Assembly and his facilitators to strengthen this reference by changing it to "ensuring access to sexual and reproductive health."

However, language on women's rights and gender equality has been weakened in the third draft and a request to ensure a gender balance in the staffing of the United Nations, including at the senior levels has been deleted.

Governments are now taking a two-week break from discussions on the outcome document and will return on August 22nd to tie up the many loose ends. At the moment, it is unclear how negotiations will proceed in the lead-up to the Summit. There are still many areas in the 158-paragraph document where governments have clearly diverging views, such as on UN management reform, trade, and the creation of a new Human Rights Council to replace the current Commission on Human Rights; much work will need to be done before consensus can be reached.

It is clear that nothing in the draft can be considered secure until there is agreement on the whole declaration. Given this, advocacy must continue in capitals and at missions to the UN over the coming weeks to ensure that the outcome document remains strong on reproductive health, women's human rights, gender equality and women's empowerment.

For the full outcome document, click here: http://www.un.org/ga/59/hlpm_rev.2.pdf.

After the Summit

Having strong language on reproductive health in the 2005 World Summit outcome document is just one step toward the goal of integrating efforts to guarantee universal access to reproductive health into strategies to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. At the national level, governments are expected to develop and implement national-level plans aimed at achieving the MDGs. While at the international level, there is a possibility that the targets and indicators that fall under each of the eight MDGs may be improved to better help governments measure their progress.

The Interagency Expert Group on the Millennium Development Goals Indicators (IAEG)—which was responsible for defining the eight overarching Millennium Development Goals, 18 targets and 48 indicators in 2001—is expected to convene in October 2005, in Rome, to revisit the MDG framework. The group, which is comprised of officials from UN agencies, international financial institutions, and the UN secretariat, as well as statistical experts and government observers, is expected to strengthen the framework based on technical recommendations from the UN Millennium Project. However, this will only happen if governments give them the political support to do so through the agreements reached at the 2005 World Summit. Any revision of the targets and indicators will take place in close consultation with the Secretary-General and governments.

The Millennium Project Task Force on Child Health and Maternal Health notes that if we are to achieve the goal of improving maternal health, the goal's current target—to reduce the maternal mortality ratio by three-quarters between 1990 and 2015—is insufficient. While reducing maternal mortality is a crucial and urgent priority, governments must address the full range of issues that affect women's ability to experience pregnancy and childbirth safely and in optimum health. One critical factor for improving maternal health is ensuring that women have access to comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services, as well as education and information, before, during and after pregnancy. As such, the task force recommends the addition of a new target under the Maternal Health Goal:

Universal access to reproductive health services by 2015 through the primary health care system, ensuring the same rate of progress or faster amongst the poor and other marginalized groups.

The Millennium Project has also made a number of recommendations to add or move indicators on sexual and reproductive health issues to better measure progress towards improving maternal health, as well as achieving gender equality and combating HIV and AIDS. The proposed new and revised indicators include:

- Contraceptive prevalence rate (currently an indicator under Goal 6, with recommended reallocation to Goal 5)
- HIV prevalence among 15-24 year old women (Goal 6)
- Proportion of demand for family planning satisfied (Goals 3 and 5)
- Adolescent fertility rate (Goals 3 and 5)
- Availability of emergency obstetric care (Goal 5)

At present, the current draft of the 2005 World Summit Outcome document commits governments to adopt and begin implementing national-level development strategies to achieve the MDGs by 2006. It also calls upon them to integrate efforts to achieve universal access to reproductive health by 2015 in those strategies. The inclusion of appropriate targets and indicators on sexual and reproductive health in the MDG framework will help governments do this.

Continued advocacy with the IAEG and governments will be necessary following the 2005 World Summit to ensure that access to sexual and reproductive health services and information become an integral part of strategies to achieve the MDGs.

Briefing Cards: Millennium Development Goals and Sexual and Reproductive Health

FCI's briefing cards on the Millennium Development Goals and sexual and reproductive health are now available in English, French and Spanish!

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Download the PDF versions at: http://www.familycareintl.org/pubs/publications_SRH.php.

Calendar of Events

September

7-9	Meeting of Speakers of Parliament (New York, USA)
7-9	DPI-NGO Meeting (New York, USA)
10	Global Call to Action against Poverty White Band Day (Global)
12	Launch of the Partnership for Newborn, Maternal and Child Health (New York, USA)
14-16	General Assembly High-Level Plenary to Review Implementation of MDGs (New York, USA)
15-17	Clinton Global Initiative Inaugural Meeting (New York, USA)

This E-Bulletin is published by:

Family Care International
588 Broadway, Suite 503
New York, NY 10012
Tel: (212) 941-5300
Fax: (212) 941-5563
info@fcimail.org
www.familycareintl.org